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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

SAFSS

1964 MAY 25 13 32

26 MAY 1964

[redacted]

MEMORANDUM FOR The Director, ~~(S)~~ National Reconnaissance Office

SUBJECT: Crisis Management Satellite Reconnaissance

I am forwarding a memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Subject: "Strategic Reconnaissance," dated March 31, 1964, which recommends action to achieve a quick reaction reconnaissance capability for crisis [redacted] management and SIOP targeting.

I agree, in general, with the need for crisis management satellite reconnaissance. Accordingly, you are directed to take action within the ~~(TS)~~ National Reconnaissance Program to achieve the following objectives.

a. Improve the present satellite reconnaissance capability to support crisis management so that hard copy CORONA quality (KH-4 [redacted] photography of the maximum number of indicator targets achievable during one day's coverage can be delivered to the ~~(G)~~ National Photographic Interpretation Center within 48 to 72 hours at request. This action must be repeatable once within 24 hours and then once again 48 hours later for a total of three days of coverage.

b. Exploit to the full the capabilities of the [redacted] photographic system to provide a crisis management tool, with system capabilities, such as the possible time intervals for receipt of hard copy following coverage of the appropriate highest priority targets, and the selection of such targets for coverage, as determined in an on-going study which you have under way.

c. These capabilities are to be achieved in an evolutionary fashion -- mainly by engineering changes and improvements, together with selected developments.

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Page 1 of 2 Pages

FILE 1

BCS - 04960/64

d. The capabilities will be exercised during peacetime as integral productive elements of the normal ~~(TS)~~ National Reconnaissance Program. During periods of crisis, they must be operated in an apparently peaceful manner so that they do not become provocative in themselves or serve as indicators of our own planning or intentions.

Please determine the impact on your fiscal 65 ~~(S)~~ NRO financial plan to cover immediate actions in response to this directive. I will expect your fiscal 66 estimates in the near future.

With regard to the Joint Chiefs of Staff comment on satellite post-attack reconnaissance, I believe that the studies which you are now preparing on the subject are a necessary prerequisite to further considerations concerning this capability. Action on the "Near-Term" (desired) quick reaction satellite capability commented on by the Joint Chiefs of Staff will be deferred pending the determination noted in subparagraph b., above.

Robert S. McNamara

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